

Health and Wellness:

Stop Text Neck

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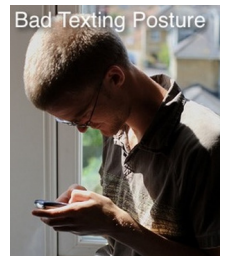
With two thirds of the human population carrying cell phones, and the far majority texting, in addition to the other electronic devices that compel us to keep looking down, the result is a relatively new term called “Text Neck” referring to the many physical ailments created by looking down for extended periods of time.

The Problem

Following is a list of text neck dangers, with some causing serious permanent damage:

- disc compression and herniation
- flattening of the spinal curve
- gastrointestinal problems
- loss of lung volume capacity
- muscle and nerve damage
- numbness and aches
- onset of early arthritis
- spinal degeneration and misalignment

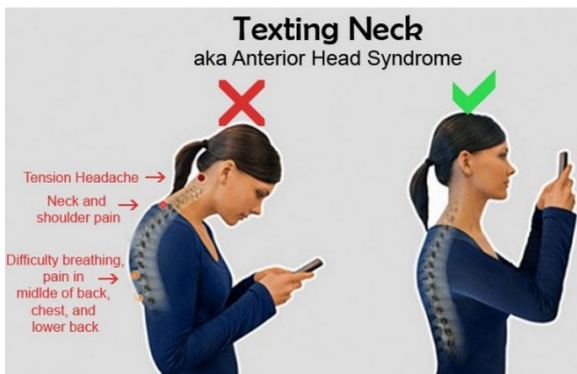
Depending on many factors, some people are affected by this new phenomena sooner rather than later, but anyone looking down for extended periods of time will be effected eventually. Unfortunately, the natural tendency to look down needs to be curtailed for the smarter and healthier approach of raising the device high enough so that your head is looking straight ahead rather than down.



The Solution

The best position for your head while looking at any mobile device is neutral (center of ears over shoulders with the device directly in front of your mouth). Because the human head weighs about 10 pounds, for every inch away from the neutral position, the weight increases by 100%. Thus, more craning = more weight = more problems. Another strategy is to take frequent breaks.

There's an app for that! Both iPhone and Android users can Google “text neck app” or see numbers (3) and (4) below to add an app to your phone to guide you to the proper position.



Additional Resources

Also, there are great exercises to relieve text neck pain provided in number (2) below. As they say, if you do nothing, it will get worse. Keep your chin and head up! As with any health issue, it is important to learn as much as you can. Here are a few links to get you started:

- (1) <http://text-neck.com/>
- (2) <http://www.self.com/flash/fitness-blog/2011/10/6-ways-to-relieve-text-neck/>
- (3) <http://www.iphonelife.com/blog/32015/watch-your-neck-app-helps-you-avoid-text-neck>
- (4) <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.textneckbeta.gui&hl=en>

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